

7-1948

The Rouen Post, July 1948

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.wustl.edu/rouen_post

Recommended Citation

"The Rouen Post, July 1948" (1948). *The Rouen Post*. Paper 119.
https://digitalcommons.wustl.edu/rouen_post/119

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Base Hospital 21 Collection at Digital Commons@Becker. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Rouen Post by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Becker. For more information, please contact engeszer@wustl.edu.

THE ROUEN POST

Base Hospital 21 — World War I

21st Gen. Hosp. — World War II

A PAPER DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF ROUEN POST No. 242
AND ALL FORMER MEMBERS OF B.H. 21 and 21st. G.H.

"21 ON DECK"



RANDOM LINES

from an
editor's
note book . . .

In which account is given to the many inquiries we have regarding the next reunions.

Are any reunions planned for this year? If not this year, when? Those are the questions.

In view of these requests from those who were unable to attend and/or who did not know of the 1947 reunions . . . it is this writer's opinion, that we should reunite in 1949 . . . The members of Base Hospital 21 of World War I are not getting younger and five year intervals between reunions may mean the passing of some one who would have enjoyed just one more fling with the gang . . .

To the second 21st of World War II . . . do not emulate the first 21st's early years, following the war . . . when none but fragmentary efforts were made to keep alive the incidents and memories of our unit . . . when there were still smoldering petty jealousies . . . because lesser persons disagreed with better men.

You of the second 21st are off to a better start . . . and we do take a bow . . . you have a pattern to follow. When our pattern was

completed . . . we went forward . . . the records will bear this out.

Beginning with the organization of Rouen Post 242 in the American Legion framework . . . with a charter and by-laws limiting membership to former members of Base Hospital 21 of World War I . . . subsequently amended to include former members of the 21st General of World War II . . . and the sons and daughters of former members of both units . . . gave us a proper and good vehicle. Thru it we gained strength.

At first, some of the better informed organization men committed us to dry-rot . . . even before we were organized . . . an exclusive post cannot live, they said . . . true we have never attained a large membership, in mere numbers of individuals, but we did build a vehicle sufficiently strong to untangle the twisted threads and knit the unit into a solid group.

242 came into being in May, 1936 . . . by May, 1937 we had gained enough courage and strength to promote our first national reunion . . . commemorating our 20th anniversary.

In May 1917 Base Hospital 21 was assembled and immediately sent overseas. This date has been especially significant to members of our unit, since, unlike you of the second 21st . . . basic training for the officers and nurses consisted of seeing the sights in London, England . . . and a round of teas and social events with the King and Queen . . . and lesser dignitaries.

The enlisted personnel received their basic training at Blackpool, England . . . a watering resort . . . which consisted of a few mornings of calisthenics . . . a visit to an impro-

THE ROUEN POST

vised trench . . . for gas precautions . . . and then, lo and behold . . . the unit was sent to France to assume charge of a British General Hospital . . . almost on the eve of a big push . . . there was dissatisfaction because officers and men alike had not yet learned how to be soldiers . . . or even act like soldiers. Fine commanding officers like Fife, Murphy, Clopton and Veeder . . . soon molded this motley group into shape . . . and it functioned better than any similar group in the A.E.F. . . . and that is recorded in the history of World War I.

You of the 21st General with your youth, energy and genuine enthusiasm for your unit can and will carry on . . . in a better fashion. You are on the road. You have a good mailing list . . . and from recent letters . . . a group of men and women interested in perpetuating the memories . . . and the friendships of your war . . . Let nothing swerve you from this goal . . . you will have much fun . . . and as the years roll on your associations will mean more to you . . . just as they did . . . and still do . . . to us . . . even though it required years for us to learn this.

Should you of the 21st General have any petty jealousies . . . differences of opinion . . . foul left-overs of your war days . . . banish them . . . bury them so deeply that their ugly faces may never again appear . . . and the accompanying odor may be forever obliterated. Any spirited outfit would have these things . . . under the guise of duty of above self . . . strong minds clashed . . . as to procedure or policy . . . breeding a bitterness . . . which can only be mellowed by the years. We of Base Hospital 21 have ground the edges of the teeth of bad-feeling . . . down to a dullness . . . where the bite only brings jibes and laughs . . . Only one case has come to life . . . in recent years . . . and we were surprised . . . not from a shallow, unthinking person . . . no . . . from a man who has attained considerable stature in his chosen field . . . still expressing bitterness . . . toward better men . . . still catering to the officers . . . he wrote. What caused this bitterness in the mind of the disillusioned youth? . . . who, now grown to manhood . . . still continues to be resentful . . . after a war experience at a base hospital . . . quite unlike being with the First or Second Divisions of our war. What frustrations had poisoned this man in his

youth we'll never know . . . but why has he not returned to St. Louis, our birthplace . . . to better evaluate the men and women of his former unit . . . with more mature judgment . . . and not with the feeling that again we are . . . catering to the officers . . . and all of this after 31 years.

In conclusion, you of the 21st General, now scattered to the four corners of the globe . . . you have a great group of leaders . . . in the St. Louis gang . . . as so many of our readers refer to them . . . they will carry the load . . . and the idea of reunions . . . more frequently than five years . . . should become a fixed program . . . and in the future set-up of your chosen vehicle, Rouen Post 242 . . . should there be included . . . on the executive staff . . . some member from the hinterland . . . and you of the enlisted personnel . . . this writer knows . . . that this is not an officers only organization . . . it so happens that your writer served on both sides of the fence and knows the problems of each . . . You of the 21st General . . . use that old battle cry of the veterans of World War I . . . **21 on Deck** . . . and see that it is used at least at two year intervals . . . You are a great, fine bunch of people . . . so let's carry on!!!!

* * * *



The following verse was inspired by Col. Borden Veeder's raid on a dance being given by a group of Unit 21 nurses and sergeants on New Year's Eve, 1918, in General Hospital 12 at Rouen. The affair, a violation of an army regulation prohibiting the fraternization of nurses and enlisted men, was staged so close to the Colonel's quarters that he was reluctantly forced to take action.

THE LAST WALTZ

'Twas New Years Eve and the Point Hut
Was the scene of a jolly dance.
The lamps shone o'er fair nurses
And sergeants in issue pants.
Suddenly the voice of the Colonel
Put lead in the flying feet
"I'm cutting in," roared Borden,
"Now all of you-allez, VITE."

THE ROUEN POST

GLEANINGS OF INTEREST

From letters and questionnaires

By Colonel L. D. Cady

1st Lt. Irene Steplyk, ANC., out of the Army since April 30, 1948, said her most justifiable gripe was inspections at times when they were busy. She was most impressed with the courage with which the young boys took their disabilities "on the chin" and the perfect soldiers they were as patients.

Maj. Alfred Wollack, MC., is still working in the Reserve. He has a Bronze Star Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, and a Soldier's Medal he got after he left the Unit in France. He is impressed most by "the mental and physical beating one was subjected to during combat service and the small recollection of the same retained today" after three years.

Carroll Wolford, Newberry, Indiana, is running his own retail drugstore. "Looking back on my Army days I realize that I couldn't have been in a finer outfit. There were times when we all got pretty disgusted, but now that we are back home, we don't remember much about the unpleasant things, but rather try to remember the fun and the good times we had. Our little orchestra . . . wish . . . swing session . . . wasn't wonderful . . . lots of fun."

Joseph L. Composto's pet peeve was food, and most impressed by "The spirit of unity and friendship this outfit possessed."

Mrs. Maudie (Morris) Horne, MR-PK, Sta. 15, North Field, Guam, fell for an engineer and married him. Reports Lillian Alquist is married too. She wants to attend one of the 21st reunions, as she wants to show her navy husband "the best outfit in the service". They may be transferred to Japan or India in a matter of six months.

Leonard Nowak married Miss Grace Louise Grewer, June 5, 1948, St. Joseph, La., and they are at home at McKinney, Texas. He is registrar of the Veterans Administration Hospital there.

C. E. Erickson, former Captain MAC, and CO of Medical Detachment, came to us from the 58th Station Hospital in Italy. He left us during those heart-wringing days when a few points made a difference in whether he would go home, stay in France, or go to Japan. He got to Japan. I saw him at the American Medical Convention, Chicago, June 19 to 25, 1948, and he looked fine without the worry lines in his face. Address: Park Central Hotel, 300 E. Armour, Kansas City, Mo.

Captain (Old Hutch) F. J. Hutcheson, Box 156, La Belle, Fla., Baroid Sales Division, National Lead Co., is going back home to Ohio in July. He wants to know if Bill Dann and Abe Bolotin are still with me. . . . Yes!

Former WO Coleman Friedman says, "I know this is a grand task you have undertaken to bring the history of the 21st General Hospital up to date and please don't hesitate if there is any little thing I can do to assist in this big job." Most justifiable gripe: "None." That alone ought to be one! . . . Says he won 500 francs from Lt. Hancock on V-J Day. Hancock must have fallen down, or something.

1st Lt. Viola Saul, ANC, has had a tough time. She left us in Italy on a "Zof I" and has been in ten different hospitals for the last 37 months. In April she wrote that she had been "boarded for general duty", and had resigned from the Regular Army. It was funny, she said, when on a certain balcony that "Maggie" sorrowfully called, "Romeo, wherefore art thou?" and was surprised to hear from the garden below some GI's voice, "Here I am, Juliet!"

NEWS OF FRENCH FRIENDS

Mlle. Marie Elizabeth Winckler, Croix Rouge Française, at Mirecourt, married Lt. Michel Merle d'Aubigne, of CONAD Headquarters. He has been pursuing his studies in Paris. A daughter Claire was born 15 May, 1948. They live 4, rue Nobel, Paris XVIIIe, France. Mme. d'Aubigne was awarded the Medal of Freedom for her services to the 21st General Hospital.

M. le Chanoine de Rosieres, Director of the Retreat, Basoilles et Menil par Mattaincourt, Vosges, France,—near Mirecourt, was also awarded the Medal of Freedom, at the Military Circle, St. Augustin Place, Paris, May 28, 1948. It was a hard job getting it dislodged from the red-tape, once the papers had gone astray. Father de Rosieres was a marked man by the Nazis for his underground work with the FFI and other resistance activities. I wish there were space and time to recount all his services.

General Touzet du Vigier, 14 rue de L'Assomption, Paris, France, gave the 21st General Hospital a lot of service in Bou-Hanifia, Algeria, and contributed a lot to that feeling of nostalgia which so many of the unit had for a couple of years after leaving North Africa. When we left France, General du Vigier was Military Governor of Strasbourg. He is now retired from the regular French Army. The General's Medal of Freedom was with Palm. He says, "It is a very precious token of our comradeship which will remain for the rest of my life. I do not know how to thank you for that distinction, and I send you my deepest gratitude now."

'TWAS IN 1918

Wednesday, June 12th, Champ de Courses

Five O'clock P.M.

This peerless performance, the Unit 21 Circus, a wartime entertainment enterprise of extraordinary magnitude, will take place in an immense outdoor stadium on the race course, the spectators being seated in the main grand stand of beautiful Champ de Courses.

The event which promises to eclipse all previous attempts at amusement productions on the grand scale is given to commemorate the first anniversary of the arrival in Rouen of

United States Base Hospital Unit

21

Operating British No 12 GENERAL HOSPITAL

The producers and performers, each one a member of this unit offer for your approval

21

Dazzling Divertissements:

by an Astonishing Aggregation of Acrobatic Artists, Colossal Combinations of Clever Clowns and Comedians. A Dare-devil Death Defying Demoniacal Dice for Life, and Glittering Galaxies of Gymnastic Geniuses Steel Sinowed Sons of Sampson in Feats of Fortitude Wire Walking Wonders Hoisting at Heavenly Heights. Stirring Stunts and Surprises Innumerable.

PANORAMIC PAGEANT

Parade of Performers headed by Mirthful Melodious Clown Jazz Band.

CONCERT

Tuneful selections rendered by Rouen Base Band. Special numbers by Krausmeyers's Weiner Schnitzel Orchestra.

Acrobats.

Aerial Acrobatic Artists in awe inspiring series of parallel bar, tumbling and pyramid forming stunts. Introducing Lt Noble's new and original acts rivaling in cleverness and athletic prowess anything ever before attempted

THE ROUEN POST

LARIAT THROWERS

The spirit of the frontier is reflected in the lariat work of the Rangers whose act is a decided feature of the show. Reared in an atmosphere of Cactus and Sagebrush, educated in the school of the six-shooter and the herd, trained in the craft of the plainsmen, these dashing knights of a day fast fading have arranged a treat of lariat handling that has met with spontaneous applause wherever their act has appeared. Heller Hightower and Fearless Fuller formerly of the Bar X Ranch and at one time the terror San Pedro County holds the world's record for roping and tying a steer.

CLOWNS

Presenting for the first time in France, Vinblanc's Capricious Clowns in a medley of side splitting episodes of eccentricity. At the expense of a fortune this assembly of clowning comies have been gotten together, and the international popularity of their work has amply repaid the management for its expenditure. All clowndom has been ransacked that this feature of our show might outrival any clown act, past or present. They are a tonic for the blues and a sure cure for despondency.

WIRE WALKERS

Madame Butterfly and Monsieur Butternut, Nimble Nipponese wire walkers. An artistic feature from the far off land of the rising sun.

STONG MEN

Hercules Voor's troupe of tumbling, balancing, posing performers. Weight lifting juggling and tricks of prestidigitation and legerdemain.

SLIDE FOR LIFE

Giant Jawed Joan's journey through space suspended in mid-air.

Byrn's Blood Thirsty Thespians

Present "Hospital Hippodrome". A slashing surgical satire in one dressing.

MAYPOLE DANCE

A historically accurate reproduction of this symbolic spectacle of beauty and Fantasy.

CYCLONIC CARICATURISTS

Pictorial Satires of Popular Personages, Current Conditions and Future Events.

GIANTS JOUST

A revival of the sports of the days of chivalry by monster men.

Wrecker Welsh.

Nature defying deeds of destruction. Human arch supporting the weight of four chevaux or twenty hommes.

UNIT 21 MEMORIES OF CARNAC

While awaiting orders to proceed to Brest for embarkation.

by Bill Stack

Early spring in Brittany—Fox-trotting, with wooden-shoed Breton maidens, to dance music furnished by a venerable gramophone in a dimly-lighted cafe overlooking the beach at Carnac Plage—Villagers in fancy Sunday dress wending their way to Church. Women in starched lace headdresses and bulging skirts; men sporting broad-brimmed low-crowned hats with streamers of ribbon, fancy vests, embroidered jackets, wooden shoes lined with straw—Young women braving the disapproval of their elders by wearing leather shoes on the Sabbath—Lighthouses off the rocky coast flashing red and green warnings through the mists.

Long avenues of lichen-covered stones standing like ghosts on lonely moors in the twilight. Believed by pious

natives to be pagan hordes miraculously turned to stone while pursuing the good St. Cornelius. Students once dismissed them as windbreaks erected by the Roman Legions but modern authorities know them as the monuments of a forgotten people.

The theft of a basket of fresh crabs belonging to Col. Veeder from the hotel kitchen at Carnac Plage. Members of the kitchen staff placed under arrest and questioned, but the case of the vanishing crustaceans is still unsolved after 29 years. Candles gleaming in the gloomy monastery at nearby Pleuharnel—Fresh starfish placed nightly in Kohn's bed—Personal property bags searched and relieved of Mills bombs and other lethal souvenirs—The mutinous protests from squad assigned to sweep seaweed from the beach.

The Colonel and the Adjutant
Were walking hand in hand
They wept like anything to see
Dank sea-weed on the sand:
"If this were only cleared away,"
They said, "It would be grand!"
"If seven men with seven brooms
Were told to sweep the shore
Do you suppose," the Colonel said,
"They'd welcome such a chore?"
"Of course not," said the Adjutant,
"But 'twould help the esprit de corps."



BILL ENGEL